

68 PAGES OF TWISTED TALES OF TERROR!

NIGHTMARE

50¢

TM

APRIL
1971



Boris - 70

**WHEN
THE
DAWN
GODS
WAR!**

PLUS MANY MORE
EXCITING STORIES IN
THIS ALL-ORIGINAL
TOP TALENT ISSUE!

BOYS! MEN!



HERE ARE THE KIND OF TESTIMONIALS YOU WILL WANT TO WRITE AFTER YOU MASTER DYNAFLEX:

"I tried two other muscle strong systems before I tried Dynaflex. It really works and I now have the strength and muscle tone I always wanted. I can't praise Dynaflex enough."

"I never thought you can really tone your muscles and make them as strong, without long periods of exercise; or weight lifting. . . . Dynaflex has truly amazed me."

"Every summer it seemed to be the same old story—I don't like to admit this but I was pretty much a jerk. I never really stayed in shape. I never knew what I could have at a glance. Now with Mike Marvel Secret New Dynaflex Method that tones BIG MUSCLES INTO POWERHOUSES OF ACTION, I feel like a RANGER ON THE PROWL. I've got steady GLADIATOR POWER IN MY Shoulders, Arms, Legs and Tans— and I feel every inch the DYNAMO OF ACTION PACKED WITH POWER IN EVERY MUSCLE IN MY BODY."

MY SECRET NEW DYNAFLEX METHOD CAN GIVE YOU POWERFULLY TONED MUSCLES AND PUT FULL STRENGTH IN YOUR MUSCLES . . . MAKE THEM SO STRONG YOU WILL BE PROUD TO SHOW YOUR FRIENDS HOW FULL OF STRENGTH YOU ARE ! IN JUST TEN MINUTES A DAY—with ABSOLUTELY NO WEIGHTS, NO BAR BELLS, NO FORMAL LONG EXERCISES AT ALL!! (MAKES GLADIATOR MUSCLES TO A GLADIATOR JOB)

"Yes if the girls laugh at you now when you try doing anything that requires strength-toned up muscles—they will be amazed, astonished, with the strength and strong men things you will be able to do after you master the DYNAFLEX METHOD! You will be so proud of the feats of strength you will be able to do, of the increased power in every one of your muscles" says Mike Marvel, Master of toning and putting strength into muscles!

Put—do yourself a favor— Try your muscles and see if they are as strong as you would like them to be. Can you lift as much as you think you should be able to? If not, then it's time for your muscle strength. Believe it or not, I can increase your muscle tone . . . add strength to your muscles . . . improve your ability to develop your new found BIG MUSCLE STRENGTH— strengthen your body and mind. You will be delighted at how strong you have become, of how easily you perform things that require muscle tone—strength—endurance—that you never thought you had in you!

HOW DYNAFLEX TONES MUSCLES AND INCREASES THE STRENGTH OF YOUR MUSCLES

Dynaflex is the Modern Method—almost a muscle tone training your muscles . . . it takes no toning tools, no special equipment, no special exercises, just the amazing discovery of a West German Doctor, whose research into the science of Strength found a startling new way to train your muscles for strength and endurance. It is minutes a day with Dynaflex you "TONE" each muscle once, in a certain way that is more effective than if you exercised the muscle 20-30 times over. 1000 times the old fashioned way!

STRONG MAN SEX APPEAL

Acquire male ho-men appeal, display tests of strength or weakness, so typical of manhood and strength will be measured in about what you can do at the beach, in the gym, in sports you enjoy . . . The ladies will stare at your display of strength with envy and jealousy, when they see all the girls crowd around

to watch how strong you have become, how you toned your muscles and filled them full of strength, and if the boys want to know how you did it, just direct them to my secret book on Dynaflex. (Complete instructions in one book only \$1.95, included Free a chapter on "SECRETS OF ATTRACTING GIRLS".

MAIL NO-RISK TRIAL COUPON NOW!

Mike Marvel, 8811, 20 16 East 41st Street
New York, N.Y. 10016 r.m. 1501

D.K. Mike Marvel, enclosed in my \$1.95, send me your entire Dynaflex System in one book which includes 1 chapter on "SECRETS OF ATTRACTING GIRLS". I must warn you that the Dynaflex method has given me powerfully toned muscles, put full strength in my muscles, made me so strong that I can't believe to show my friends how strong I am.

And it must do this in 10 minutes a day—with nothing else to buy—now or in the future, or I get my \$1.95 back—with no questions asked upon return of the book.

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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FROM WITHOUT THE EXPRESS PERMISSION OF THE PUBLISHER. PRINTED IN CANADA.

DR. WROCLAW, IS THE PRISONER, VARGA AWARE OF THE DANGER INVOLVED IN THIS OPERATION?

THE ELEMENT OF RISK HAS BEEN MADE CLEAR TO HIM, MILNER.



YOU MAKE THIS DUMB LOUT OUT TO BE A HERO, MILNER? WHAT OF MEN LIKE OURSELVES? NO, YOU CANNOT COMPARE THE TRUE HEROES OF SCIENCE TO A BRAWLING SAVAGE LIKE VARGA!



SUCH RISKS MUST BE ASSUMED IF SCIENCE IS TO ADVANCE! AND, AFTER ALL, WHAT CAN IT MATTER TO A CONVICTED MURDERER LIKE VARGA!

BY CONSENTING THE EXPERIMENT HE HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE HIS OTHERWISE STUPID AND USELESS BRITISH LIFE FINALLY MEAN SOMETHING!



AND IF WE FAIL?

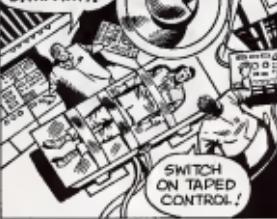
THEN HE DIES A FEW HOURS EARLIER THAN THE LAW DECREES IT MATTERS LITTLE!



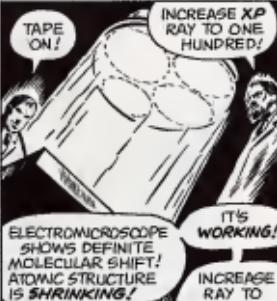
I CANNOT HELP BUT THINK THAT WITHOUT MEN LIKE POOR VARGA HERE OUR THEORIES MIGHT REMAIN NOTHING MORE THAN EMPTY WHISPERS IN THE IVORY TOWER OF MEDICAL SCIENCE.



CAN YOU FEEL NO KINSHIP WITH HIM AS A MAN? NO SYMPATHY?



TAPE ON!



IT'S WORKING!



Script by Sinclair Rich • Art by Sean Todd • Inked by Dan Adams



A HECTIC HOUR LATER:













MEANWHILE AT THE WROCLAW HOME...

WE'VE GOT A KILLER ON THE LOOSE, MILNER! CAN'T YOU THINK OF ANYTHING THAT MIGHT HAVE SET HIM OFF, SOMETHING THAT MIGHT LEAD US TO HIM?

HE WAS OVERWORKED... UH, OBSESSED WITH THIS SHRINKING THEORY, ALL NONSENSE OF COURSE...

GOTTA PROTECT MYSELF!

WHEN THE EXPERIMENT FAILED IT MUST HAVE BEEN TOO MUCH FOR HIM!

WROCLAW WAS JUST SEEN UPTOWN AT THIRD AND MAIN! HE JUST RAN DOWN FOUR PEOPLE! KILLED THEM ALL!





**DRIVEN COMPLETELY
INSANE IN THE LAST
FLEETING MOMENTS
OF LIFE, HENRY
WROCLAW'S SEETHING
BRAIN SUMMONED
ITS LAST LINE OF
DEFENSE, THE
UNSPEAKABLE
HORRORS OF THE
SUBCONSCIOUS
MIND!**

I'M ALL
RIGHT!
THE
FALL
NEVER
HURT
ME!
I'LL
GET
OUT
OF---



~~AND WHO KNOWS HOW LONG THAT SUBCONSCIOUS, ONCE AROUSED
CAN LIE. VARGA KNOWS!~~

THE END







...A BIT OF SKIN FROM A SUBJECT, AND UNDER THE RIGHT TREATMENT, THAT SKIN WILL GROW INTO AN EXACT DUPLICATE OF THE ORIGINAL ORGANISM!

FRANK,
ISN'T THAT
JUST
FASCINATING?

YOU AGREED TO TAD'S OFFER OF PARTNERSHIP IN THE EXPERIMENT. YOU KNEW IT WAS ONLY AN EXCUSE FOR HIM TO SEE MORE OF SUE.

BUT...

FRANK!
FRANK!
IT'S
WORKING!

THE
CLONE'S
COMING
ALIVE!

TERRIBLY,
DARLING...

IT'S
WEAKENING!



THE STRAIN—
TOO MUCH
FOR IT!

WHY ALL
THE GLUM
FACES?

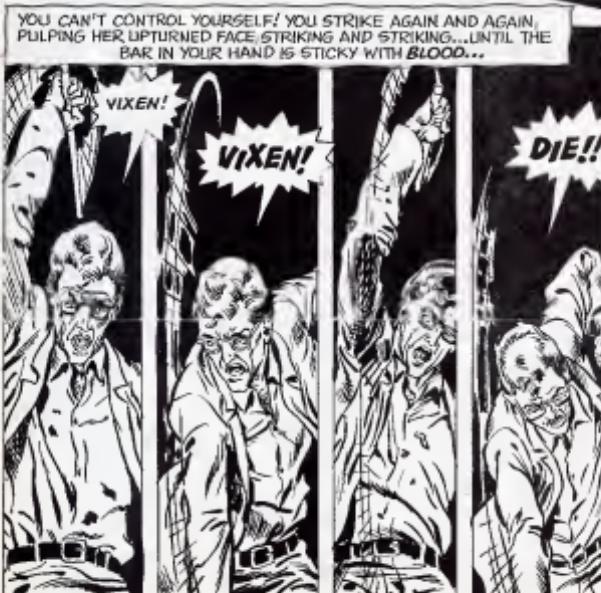
YOU TWO LOOK
LIKE CUSTOMERS
AT A MORGUE.

HELLO,
SUE!

WHY DON'T YOU TAKE
OFF FOR A FEW DAYS?
GET SOME REST.
HAVE FUN.

I'LL STAY HERE. THERE ARE
SOME MORE TESTS I HAVE
TO RUN THROUGH.







MAN--OFTEN DESCRIBED AS HAVING BEEN BORN OF TWO FATHERS; THE FATHER KNOWN AS **MATURE**, THE UNIVERSE, LIFE AND...**LOVE!** AND THE FATHER KNOWN AS **HORROR**, NIGHT, BLACKNESS AND DEATH!

THE VAMPIRE...GAUNT AND EMACIATED IN HIS THIRSTING FOR HUMAN BLOOD, AND TREACHEROUS IN HIS TECHNIQUES OF TRAPPING HIS VICTIMS...IS OF THAT FATHER OF UNHEAVENLY ORIGIN! AND SO IT BE A FITTING MEMORY THIS TALE...THAT THE GROTESQUE CREATURE--BUT DIE A MERCILESS DEATH
IN...

THE TIME: ANCIENT ROME...126 B.C.
UNDER THE RULE OF GAULS SEMPRONIUS GRACCHUS.
THE SETTING: THE GREAT ARENA...STADIUM OF MANY TRIALS OF COMBAT AND HONOR, NOW HOSTING THE ANNUAL CHARIOT RACE OF THE TRIBUNE'S FINEST HORSEMEN.

Vault of a Vampire

NIGHT HAS JUST FALLEN LIKE A SHROUD OVER THE THRONGS OF SENATORS, TRIBUNES AND PEASANTS ALIKE. EACH MAN...IN EAGER AND EVER WATCHFUL EYE TO THE OUTCOME OF THE GREAT RACE...LIGHTS A FLAMING TORCH TO THROW VIOLENT SHADOWS ON THE PERSPIRING FACES OF THE PERFORMERS AS THEY DRIVE THEIR FEVERED HORSES AND BATTLE THEIR WAY AROUND THE CHURCH...



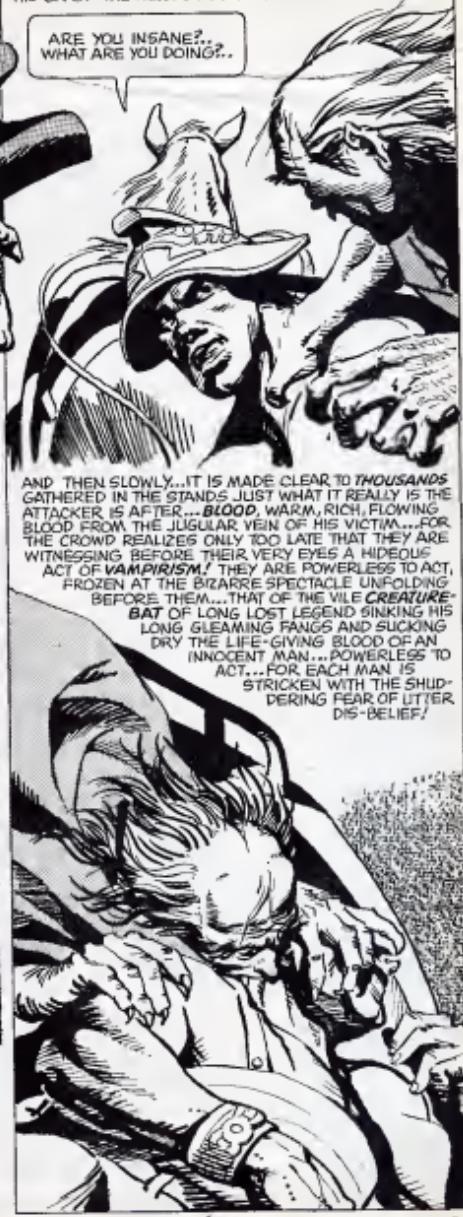
...DRIVING THEIR STEEDS AT A FRANTIC PACE AROUND
A BEND, THE CROWDS SUDDENLY FALL QUIET AND
A HUSH PERVades THE ARENA AS A MAN LEAPS
FROM THE HIGH WALL OF THE STADIUM AND LANDS
WITH CRUSHING WEIGHT ON THE BACK OF THE
LEAD RACER!

WITH MERCILESS AND UNREASONING STRENGTH THE
ATTACKER BATTLES THE CHARIOTEER, KNOCKING FROM
HIS GRASP THE REIGNS AND FORCING HIM TO HIS KNEES...

ARE YOU INSANE?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?...



AND THEN SLOWLY...IT IS MADE CLEAR TO THOUSANDS
GATHERED IN THE STANDS JUST WHAT IT REALLY IS THE
ATTACKER IS AFTER...BLOOD, WARM, RICH, FLOWING
BLOOD FROM THE JUGULAR VEIN OF HIS VICTIM...FOR
THE CROWD REALIZES ONLY TOO LATE THAT THEY ARE
WITNESSING BEFORE THEIR VERY EYES A HIDEOUS
ACT OF VAMPIRISM! THEY ARE POWERLESS TO ACT,
FROZEN AT THE BIZARRE SPECTACLE UNFOLDING
BEFORE THEM...THAT OF THE VILE CREATURE—
BAT OF LONG LOST LEGEND SINKING HIS
LONG GLEAMING FANGS AND SUCKING
DRY THE LIFE-GIVING BLOOD OF AN
INNOCENT MAN...POWERLESS TO
ACT...FOR EACH MAN IS
STRICKEN WITH THE SHUD-
DERING FEAR OF UTTER
DIS-BELIEF!



HE ESCAPES...TO ARMS
MEN...HE MUST NOT
ESCAPE!

LOOK...THROUGH THE
ARCH...SHADOWS
FLICKERING BY OUR
TORCHES!

SLING A SHOT
AT HIM DAMON...
IN THE HOPE OF
STRIKING HIM
IN FLIGHT!

MISS...THE
CREATURE ESCAPES
INTO THE BLACKNESS
OF NIGHT LIKE...
A DEMON!

NOTHING...
HE'S RUN
INTO THE
FOREST!

WE'LL NOT FIND
HIM THERE
TONIGHT...THE
MANY TREES
WOULD HIDE
HIM WELL!

TRUE...HE'S
DISAPPEARED...
BUT WE MUST
TAKE ACTION TO
PREVENT THIS
IN THE
FUTURE!

DAMON'S WORDS
HAVE GOOD MEAN-
ING MEN...THIS
CREATURE HAS
STUCK TOO OFTEN...
TOO SILENTLY...TO
BE ALLOWED TO
CONTINUE!

AYE...THIS IS NOT THE FIRST TIME HE HAS STRUCK...
LAST MONTH IT WAS GENERAL PROCHIUS...THE LAST
WEEK STUNNED HUNDREDS BY ATTACKING A YOUNG
WOMAN IN THE TRIBUNE'S OWN HANGING GARDENS!
WHERE WILL IT BE NEXT...THE SENATE ITSELF?

THAT FIEND IS
LIKELY TO SHOW
UP ANYWHERE!
BUT USUALLY, YOU
MIGHT NOTICE...
HE LIKES
CROWDS...

TRUE MARCUS...
HE MUST BE A
THRILL SEEKER...
OUT FOR MORE THAN
BLOOD ONLY...BUT
FOR PERVERSE
PLEASURE IN SEE-
ING MISERY IN
THE FACES OF
ONLOOKERS!

THEN WE MUST
BE READY...WE
MUST ATTEND EVERY
SOCIAL FUNCTION
WITHIN THE NEXT
FEW WEEKS...AND
WHEN THE MONSTER
ATTACKS...WE'LL
HAVE HIM!

IF HE'S HERE TONIGHT
...AT THE PARTY OF
SENATOR GATTUS...HE
SHOULD STRIKE
BEFORE LONG!

THAT IS SO...BUT HE'S NOT BEEN
HEARD OF IN WEEKS...DO YOU
THINK HE STAYS IN HIDING
ALL THIS TIME?

IT'S POSSIBLE DAMON...
BUT STILL WE MUST BE
READY...IF HE EVER...
WHAT'S THAT NOISE...





AGAIN HE MAKES WAY INTO THE NIGHT... FOR THERE IN THE DARKNESS AND MANY RUINS OF AN EMPIRE WILL HE FIND ESCAPE... PERHAPS... IF ONLY HIS PURSUITERS WERE NOT TOO DETERMINED ON HIS CAPTURE!



AND YET IT SEEMS THAT THIS NIGHT THE FIEND HAS BEEN CARELESS... HIS CRYPT--THE TOMB OF HIS ETERNAL REST IS CLOSE AT HAND TO THE SCENE OF HIS UGLY CRIME... AND BEING CHASED HE HAS THOUGHTLESSLY RETURNED TO HIS VAULT WITHOUT THINKING... WITHOUT REALIZING HE HAS LED HIS PURSUITERS TO HIS VERY FRONT DOOR...



LOOK...OVER THERE...IN THE FLEETING SHADOWS...IS THAT NOT HIM DESCENDING INTO A VAULT?

IT MUST BE HIS! THE FOOL...DOES HE NOT REALIZE HE HAS LED US TO HIS VERY GRAVE?

FOOL IS RIGHT...FOR BEFORE LONG IT WILL BE HIS GRAVE FOREVER!

AYE...HE HAS INDEED TRAPPED HIMSELF, FOR ALTHOUGH HE MUST HAVE THE DOOR BOLTED ON THE INSIDE...WE HAVE IT GUARDED FROM THE OUTSIDE!

HE'LL NOT GET OUT WITHOUT OUR KNOWING...AND WHEN HE DOES...WE'LL BEARMED...

MARCUS...RUN FOR SILVER TIPPED KNIVES AND SWORDS...AND BRING FOOD, TOO...WE'LL NOT LEAVE THIS CRYPT UNTIL HE HAS EMERGED.

THAT SHOULD NOT BE LONG...HE'LL HAVE NO FOOD IN THERE...AND SURELY HE CANNOT SURVIVE LONG WITHOUT IT...NOR WITHOUT HIS THIRST FOR BLOOD!

XXX ANO LOM
T-TUM...UPI'S
TOTUM. XX/V

AND SO STARTS A VIGIL FOR THE THREE AVENGERS OF SOCIETY...WAITING... WATCHING...FOR A TERROR STRICKEN BLOOD FIEND TO GIVE IN...TO ADMIT DEFEAT AND TAKE HIS CHANCES OUTSIDE! TO OPEN THE DOOR THAT BARS OUT HATE AND REVENGE FOR HE AND HIS KIND--OR...TO SUFFER A FATE PERHAPS WORSE THAN THAT OF A VIOLENT DEATH...THAT OF SLOW... PAINFUL...AGONIZING...STARVATION WITHIN!



VILE
CREATURE...
WHAT MANNER
OF BEAST CAN
YOU BE?

DIE GLADLY
WE RELEASE YOU
FROM YOUR SEMI-
HUMAN VESTMENTS
OF LIFE...

HIDEOUS...IS IT POSSIBLE...
CAN IT REALLY BE THAT MY
EYES DO NOT DECEIVE ME...
CAN IT ACTUALLY BE THAT
THIS... THIS BLOOD DEMON
HAS STAYED ALIVE BY...
DEVOURING HIS OWN
BODY... HIS OWN
HUMAN FLESH!

AND SO DEATH COMES
QUICKLY... PERHAPS FAR
TOO QUICKLY FOR HE WHO
HAS LIVED A LIFE OF
TERROR AND OUTRAGEOUS
ATROCITY... THE VAMPIRE...
GALINT AND EMACIATED IN
HIS THIRSTING FOR HUMAN
BLOOD... IS OF THAT FATHER,
ON UNHEAVENLY ORIGIN...
AND SO IT BE IN FITTING
MEMORY THIS TALE... THAT
THE GROTESQUE CANNIBAL
DIE AN UNDENIABLE DEATH
IN... VAULT OF A VAMPIRE!

SERGIO
MORENO

STONE SPEAR IN HAND, KROOG THE HUNTER PAUSES
IN AWE-STRUCK TERROR ATOP A STONEY RIDGE--
WIDE EYES STUDYING A SIGHT HE HAS NEVER BEFORE
SEEN! A MASSIVE METAL BIRD COMES SAILING DOWN
FROM THE SKY-- BELCHING FIRE AND SMOKE AND
EMITTING A NOISE LIKE THUNDER! IS IT ANY WONDER
KROOG STANDS PARALYSED?

GREAT BIRD
FLY WITH SOUND
OF THUNDER!

COME TO EAT
KROOG, MAYBE!

WHEN THE DAWN GODS WAR!

HE CASTS OFF HIS FRIGHT
AND LEAPS FORWARD, BLOOD
BUBBLING TO THE SURGE OF
THAT WILL TO LIVE THAT HAS
KEPT HIM AND HIS TRIBE
ALIVE IN A PRIMITIVE
WORLD...

GREAT
BIRD
FALLS!

I KILL!
FEED
MANY
PEOPLE!

THEN--UTTER HORROR SEIZES UPON THE CAVEMAN HUNTER AS...

HU! GREAT BIRD OPEN MOUTH TO SWALLOW KROOG!

NO LET BIRD DO KRUG RUN!

HIS EYES BULGE IN HORROR. HIS LIPS CONTOUR IN FEAR. FROZEN IN SHOCK ARE HIS MASSIVE MUSCLES!

GREAT BIRD IT COME OUT--MAYBE HAVE SOMETHING IN BODY!



FROM THE INTERIOR OF THE STARSHIP COMES A **SOME-THING** SO UNREAL TO KROOG, SO INCREDIBLY AWFUL THAT HE CANNOT MOVE!...

WHAT IS?

WHAT THAT THING?

WHAT IT DO TO KROOG?



NO KILL KROOG!

KROOG SORRY! NOT MEAN AIM SPEAR AT GREAT ONE!

HIS KNEES SHAKE. HIS MUSCLES TURN TO WATER. HE DROPS GROUNDWARD...



RUBBERY TENTACLES SLIP A METAL BAND ABOUT KROOG'S HEAD. INSTEAD OF THE DEATH HE FEARS, UNDERSTANDING BURSTS INSIDE HIM...

CAN YOU UNDERSTAND ME, KROOG?

HU! KROOG HEAR VOICE INSIDE HEAD!

GREAT BEING SPEAK KROOG!

WE THROPOLI ARE AT WAR WITH CREATURES MUCH LIKE YOURSELF. KROOG, ONE OF THEM HAS FLED HERE TO YOUR LITTLE PLANET TO AVOID BEING CAPTURED! WE WANT YOU TO FIND HIM -- BRING HIM TO US FOR KILLING!



KROOG
DO!
KROOG
FINE
HUNTER.

KROOG
FIND MAN
YOU WANT,
THEN DO
WHAT YOU
ASK!

WHEN YOU DO
THIS, YOU
SHALL BE
GIVEN MANY
GIFTS. KEEP
THE METAL
BAND-- TO
HELP YOU
FIND
THIS MAN!

ELATED BY HIS NEW
IMPORTANCE, KROOG RUNS
ACROSS THE ROLLING
PLATEAUS OF HIS DAWN
WORLD...

OUT OF THE
FORESTS RIMMING
THAT GRASSY
SEA BURSTS
A FEARSOME
DINOSAUR...
THE GROUND
BENEATH HIS
FEET SHAKES
TO THE TREAD
OF THOSE
GALLOPING
PAWS...





AS HE EATS A SLAB OF CRUELLY COOKED BISON STEAKS, THE CAVEMAN RELATED THE ODD EVENTS OF HIS UNUSUAL DAY...

SCALED MONSTER TURN INTO SMOKE! KROOG NOT KNOW WHY!

WHAT A GOOD GIFT
MAKE ORNAMENT FOR ME!

NO! WEAR BAND ON HEAD. HELP KNOW THOUGHTS!

NOT ORNAMENT!

KROOG RIGHT! I HEAR DREAM-THOUGHTS OF DOG WHO CHASE DEER WHILE HE SLEEPS!

TOMORROW I GO FIND ENEMY OF CREATURE WHO GAVE BAND TO KROOG.

NOW I GO SLEEP. KROOG TIRED!



EARLY NEXT MORNING, EVEN BEFORE THE MISTS LEAVE THE GROUND, THE DAWN AGE HUNTSMAN IS TROTTING ALONG A WOODLAND GAME TRAIL...



HIS HEART BEATS FASTER AS THE KROOG STUDIES THE FAMILIAR FOREST EVEN AS HE LISTENS TO THAT UNFAMILIAR VOICE...

I MADE THE SCALED MONSTER INTO SMOKE YESTERDAY TO SAVE YOUR LIFE.

I AM ALL POWERFUL KROOG!

YOU MUST OBEY ME.

YOU SAVE MY LIFE!

YOU BE MY GOD BEING.



OBEYENT TO THAT VOICE, THE HUNTER OF THE DAWN WORLD SEARCHES AMONG THE FOREST GLADES UNTIL...

SEE LEAVES
WITH SPOTS, BY
WHAT DO
NOW?

GRIND UP THOSE
LEAVES. PUT THE
JUICE IN WATER
AND IN FOOD YOU
TAKE TO THE
THROPOLI.

IT WILL
KILL
THEM!

KROOG
NOT DO!
STRANGE
BEINGS
GIVE GIFT
OF METAL
BAND!

KROOG
NOT DO
WHAT
YOU
SAY.

FROM TREETOP TO TREETOP FLASHES A JAGGED BLADE OF LIGHTNING!



A CLAP OF THUNDER DEAFENS
THE HUNTSMAN...



NEXT INSTANT HIS VERY SOUL IS STUNNED TO
TERRIFIED DESPAIR AS...



FROM THE SKIES COMES A DRENCHING RAIN, PUTTING OUT THAT FIRE...

SCALEY MONSTER
MAY COME
GET
KROOG!

I SHALL PROTECT YOU.

KROOG AFRAID OF GOD-BEING!

DO WHAT GOD-BEING SAYS!

GO IN PEACE,
KROOG-- BUT
DO NOT MENTION ME
TO THE
CREATURES
FROM THE
METAL BIRD!

WITH THE SPOTTED LEAVES IN HAND, THE CAVEMAN HUNTER RETURNS TO HIS COOKING FIRES WHERE...

YOU GRIND UP-- MAKE JUICE.

DO NOT DRINK JUICE
--OR JUICE KILL!

GOD-BEING TELL KROOG ALL THIS.

FOR HOURS ATHALLA WORKS, WHEN SHE IS DONE...

PUT POISON JUICE IN FOOD.

THEN WHOLE TRIBE TAKE FOOD TO THIROPOLI ONES!

WHEN KROOG AND HIS FELLOW TRIBESMEN ARRIVE AT THE THIROPOLI SPACESHIP...

WE ARE INDEED GRATEFUL FOR THE FOOD AND WATER, KROOG. WE HAVE BEEN SO BUSY TRYING TO FIND OUR ENEMY, WE'VE HAD NO TIME TO LOCATE WATER AND MEAT, AND OUR SUPPLIES ARE RUNNING LOW.

BUT WHAT OF OUR ENEMY? HAVE YOU SEEN HIM?

FOR A MOMENT, FEAR AND DREAD WAR INSIDE THE CAVEMAN HUNTER. HE TRIES TO SPEAK THE TRUTH AND LET THESE GOD-BEING DECIDE AMONG THEM-- SELVES THESE MATTERS WHICH KROOG DOES NOT UNDERSTAND...

KROOG NOT SEE MAN. KROOG SEE NOBODY-- NOT EVEN GOD!

POOR IGNORANT SAVAGE! I SUPPOSE HE SEE "GOD" IN EVERY BOLT OF LIGHTNING, IN EVERY PEAL OF THUNDER, BEHIND EVERY BUSH, IN EACH STREAM OF WATER!

THE FOOD AND WATER STORED ABOARD THE STARSHIP, IT TAKES OFF...



OTHER EYES WATCH THAT HEAVENS-BOUND FLIGHT...



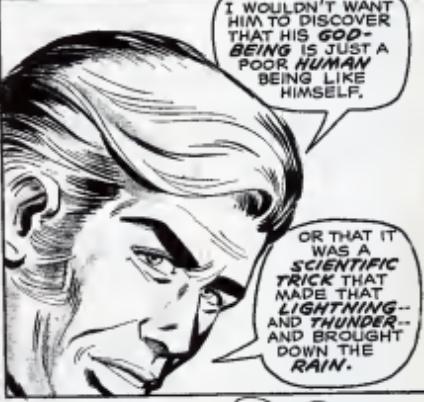
WITHOUT THE THROPOLI TO CONTROL ITS FLIGHT-- THEIR STARSHIP WILL BE ATTRACTED BY THE SUN'S GRAVITY...

-- AND PLUNGE NOW I'D BETTER TAKE MY ELECTRIC GENERATORS OUT OF THESE TREES--



I WOULDN'T WANT HIM TO DISCOVER THAT HIS GOD-BEING IS JUST A POOR HUMAN BEING LIKE HIMSELF.

OR THAT IT WAS A SCIENTIFIC TRICK THAT MADE THAT LIGHTNING-- AND THUNDER-- AND BROUGHT DOWN THE RAIN.



I'LL LET HIM GO ON THINKING I'M GOD.

UNTIL MY PEOPLE FIND ME-- IF THEY EVER DO.

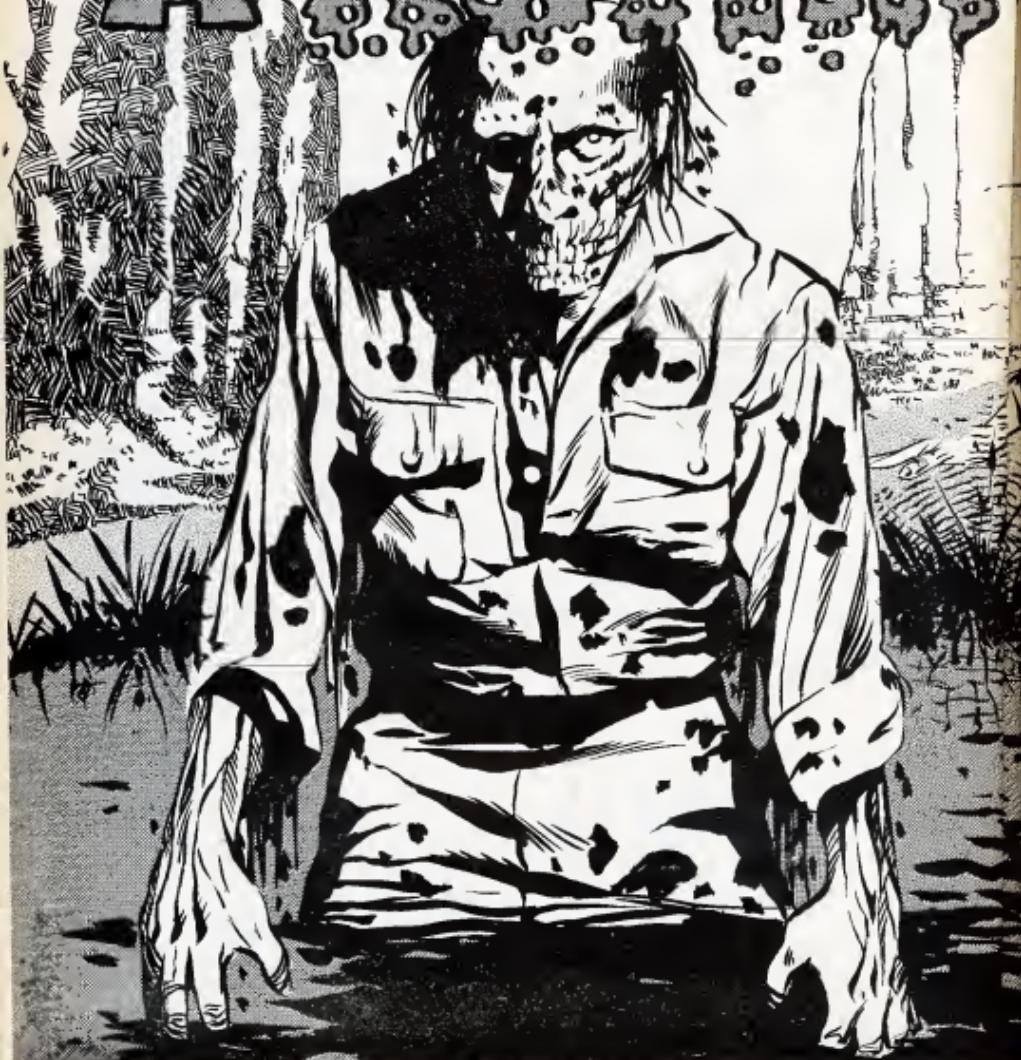
AS A MATTER OF FACT, I THINK I'LL CALL KROOG-- ADAM!

AND NAME HIS WIFE-- EVE!

AFTER MY FATHER AND MY MOTHER ON MY DISTANT HOME PLANET!



A ROTTEN



DEAL



THE BROILING DESERT SUN BEAT DOWN RELENTLESSLY ON THE SMALL ENCAMPMENT TENT NESTLED SECURELY BESIDE THE SHIMMERING OASIS. WITHIN ITS CANVAS CONFINES THE OLD MAN'S VOICE BROKE THE HEAVY SILENCE OF THE WASTELANDS.

FELIX TOWNSEND PULLED THE HEAVY DESERT BOOTS ON WITH A GROAN AND ADDRESSED HIS YOUNG NEPHEW PETER WITH AN AGED SMILE...

ACCORDING TO THE MAP THAT OLD PROSPECTOR SOLD ME, THE MINE IS ABOUT FIVE DAYS JOURNEY FROM HERE!



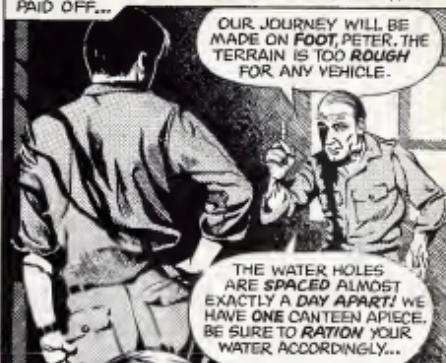
THE AGING UNCLE'S WRINKLED HAND OPENED HIS FIELD JACKET AND PATTED THE SHEATH OF PAPERS IN ITS LINING. HE NODDED AT PETER...

YOU'VE BEEN GOOD COMPANY TO AN OLD MAN THESE LAST FEW YEARS, PETER. I'M SHOWING MY APPRECIATION BY REMEMBERING YOU IN MY WILL!

MAP OF REGION

PETER STARED HUNGRILY AT THE PAPERS. HE'D WAITED MONTHS JUST TO HEAR THOSE WORDS, THE LONG HOURS OF BOREDOM WITH HIS UNCLE HAD PAID OFF...

OUR JOURNEY WILL BE MADE ON FOOT, PETER. THE TERRAIN IS TOO ROUGH FOR ANY VEHICLE.



PETER HAD SHRUGGED IN AGREEMENT. HE FIGURED THE OLD MAN WOULDN'T LAST THREE HOURS IN THE SWELTERING HEAT AND WOULD ABANDON THE CRAZY SCHEME BEFORE THE DAY WAS OUT. BUT THE WITHERED DESERT RAT PROVED HEALTHIER THAN HIS NEPHEW HAD ANTICIPATED AND IT WAS PETER WHO STUMBLED TO HIS KNEES IN EXHAUSTION BY MID-AFTERNOON...



SO IT WENT, AT THE END OF EACH SCORCHING DAY A SHIMMERING POOL OF LIFE-GIVING WATER LAY WAITING FOR THEIR THIRSTY BELIES AND EMPTY CANTEENS. BY THE TIME THEY REACHED THE THIRD OASIS, PETER'S PATIENCE AND STRENGTH WERE WEARING THIN...

WHY SHOULD I WAIT?
I'LL BE AN OLD MAN
MYSELF BY THE TIME HE
KICKS THE BUCKET. IF
I PLANNED IT **RIGHT**
IT WOULD LOOK LIKE
AN ACCIDENT!

IS THAT
YOU, NEPHEW--
UHHH!

WHO
ELSE YOU
STUPID OLD
FOOL!

PETER!
WHY...

BECAUSE
I'M TIRED
OF WAITING,
UNCLE
FELIX!

HIS CANTEEN!

PETER STRUCK THEN, AGAIN AND AGAIN WITH THE JAGGED ROCK UNTIL THE CLEAR DESERT POOL MUDDED CRIMSON AND THE OLD MAN'S LIFE EBBED AWAY IN A FEEBLE TRAIL OF BUBBLES. A BRIGHT GLINT OF METAL WINKED AT PETER FROM BEHIND THE RIPPLING SURFACE.

PETER REACHED DOWN AND LIFTED THE SHINY RECEPTACLE FROM THE QUIET FORM...

YOU WON'T NEED THIS NOW,
UNCLE, AND IT'LL MAKE THE
RETURN TRIP TWICE AS
EASY ON ME!

BY MID-AFTERNOON OF THE NEXT DAY PETER WAS GREEDILY EMPTYING HIS OWN CANTEEN INTO HIS DUSTY GULLET. IT SEEMED TWICE AS HOT NOW AS THE DAY BEFORE...

BLASTED
HEAT! GOOD
I'VE GOT
PLENTY OF
WATER!



THE COOLING WATER HAD ALMOST TOUCHED HIS LIPS WHEN SOMETHING CAUGHT HIS ATTENTION FROM THE CENTER OF THE OASIS. THE BLOATED PULPY FIGURE BOBBED TO THE SURFACE AND STARED HIDEOUSLY AT HIM WITH SIGHTLESS EYES... PETER SCREAMED...

UNCLE FELIX!
MY GOD! HOW IN
THE NAME OF HADES
DID HE GET HERE?

COYOTES MUST HAVE
DRAGGED HIM HERE
LAST NIGHT! LORD HE
STINKS! I CAN'T DRINK
THE WATER NOW... HIS
CORPSE HAS POLLUTED IT!



I'VE STILL GOT HIS
CANTEEN! I CAN MAKE
IT ON THAT... TRAVEL BY
NIGHT! YOU OLD VULTURE
I'M NOT LIKED YET!



SO HE WALKED INTO THE FREEZING DESERT NIGHT, HIS UNCLE'S CANTEEN SWINGING BEHIND HIM. BY SUNRISE, THE LAST OF THE PRECIOUS WATER, HAD PASSED OVER HIS PARCHED LIPS ...HE SEARCHED THE HORIZON DESPERATELY!



THE REEKING SLIME-COVERED HEAD FLOATED LAZILY IN THE WATER. ITS ROTTED FLESH FILLING THE DESERT AIR WITH STOMACH-CHURNING ODOR, TANTINING THE COOL LIQUID AROUND IT WITH PUTRESCENCE. PETER SHUDDERED, CHOKING BACK HIS VOMIT...

HIS HEAD BEGAN TO SWIM AS THE GROTESQUE FACE DANCED BEFORE HIM, GRINNING IDIOTICALLY...



BUT INSIDE, HE KNEW THE HIDEOUS THING IN THE OASIS WAS AS REAL AS THE DUST ON HIS SWOLLEN TONGUE. HE WIPE THE SWEAT FROM HIS FOREHEAD WITH A SHAKING HAND AND TURNED BACK TOWARD THE DESERT...



WEAK WITH THIRST AND EXPOSURE, PETER STRUGGLED DESPERATELY FOR THE ENCAMPMENT TENT MILES AWAY AND THE FINAL OASIS BESIDE IT. MERCIFULLY THE SKY DARKENED, BLOTTING OUT THE SUN. THEN TO HIS HORROR HE REALIZED IT WAS A...



HE SQUINTED INTO THE HOWLING GALE AND DREW CLOSER TO THE STUMBLING FIGURES. FROM OUT OF THE SWIRLING STORM LOOMED THE HORRID MUTILATED FACE...

PETER FASTENED HIS BANDANA ABOUT HIS FACE AND PUSHED INTO THE BLINDING, WHIRLING SAND. IT WAS THEN HE NOTICED THE DIM SILHOUETTE MOVING ALONG BESIDE HIM...



THE ROTTED TEETERING THING WAS KEEPING PACE WITH HIM, CHUNKS OF DECAYING FLESH AND MAGGOTY BONE FALLING FROM ITS STUMBLING HULK, LEAVING A TRAIL OF RANCID GORE BEHIND IT...



PETER DROVE HIMSELF ON THE QUAKING LEGS, A COLD FEAR CLUTCHING HIS HEART...



SEEMINGLY YEARS LATER THE STORM ABATED.
PETER, CRAWLING ON BLOODY HAND HANDS
AND KNEES, GAZED ABOUT HIMSELF DELIRIOUSLY...

WAS IT AN HALLUCINATION?
DID I JUST IMAGINE--
WHAT'S THIS? TRACKS!
GOD, IT'S AHEAD
OF ME!

WITH A STRENGTH BORN OF MADNESS, PETER
PUSHED UP AND HOBBLED AFTER THE GRISLY TRAIL
LEFT BY THE THING. MILES LATER, HE FOUND IT,
TRUDGING RELENTLESSLY ON, FILLING THE ACRID
AIR WITH ITS STENCH...

IT HASN'T REACHED
THE OASIS YET!

THE LAST OF HIS
WILL FADING, PETER
SCRAMBLED CRAZILY
ACROSS THE BURNING
SAND, PASSED THE
GRINNING HORROR,
AND FELL HEADLONG
INTO THE RELIEF-
GIVING POOL....

SCOOPING FRANTICALLY WITH TORN FINGERS HE
ILLED HIS ACHING STOMACH WITH THE COOLING
LIQUID UNTIL HIS GUTS BURNED AND LUNGS
BEGGED FOR AIR... THEN HE LAY GIGGLING
QUIETLY...

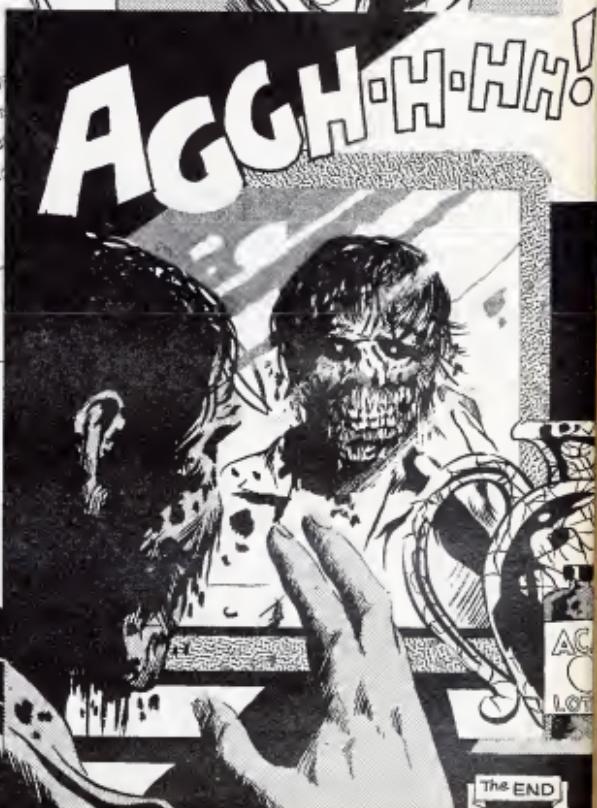
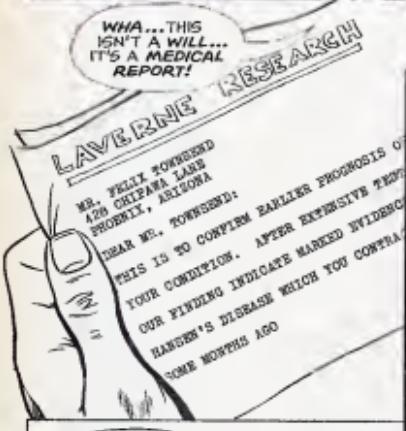
HEH-HEH-HEH!

THERE WAS A NOISE BEHIND
HIM, SHUFFLING OF DRY DE-
CAYED FEET. PETER TURNED
IN TIME TO SEE THE CORPSE
OF HIS UNCLE TOPPLE INTO
THE OASIS...

HA-HA! I WON,
YOU BLOATED HORROR!
I'VE HAD MY DRINK
ALREADY...HEH-HEH...
I BEAT YOU!

REVIVED NOW, FLUSHED WITH VICTORY, PETER WALKED ON UNSTEADY LEGS TO THE SHADE OF THE TENT AND THREW OPEN THE FLAP. IT TOOK A MOMENT FOR HIS EYES TO ADJUST THEMSELVES TO THE DARKNESS WITHIN, THEN HE ENTERED...

WITH SHAKING FINGERS HE WITHDREW THE SHEATH OF PAPERS FROM THE OLD MAN'S JACKET AND OPENED IT...



The END

HORROR MAN

He stared across the desk at me. Black unholy fear was in his eyes.

"You must do something for me! You must!" he screamed! This was Tracy Collins, the movie star. You remember him, the horror man of the screen. He played everything from werewolf to ghoul and had even won an Academy Award for his portrayal of the War-a-wolf of Chicago.

And here he was in my office screaming for help. He needed it all right, and it was my job as his doctor and his friend to help him. He was sick, very sick.

The fearful eyes stabbed at me again. "I change, Doctor. I change! Just like in the werewolf roles I played, only it's real. I become a wolf late at night and run on all fours. I howl at the moon, and I kill. I kill!" The terrified eyes pleaded, "Please, please have me locked up."

"All right now, Tracy." I tried to be calm. "I'll help you. I'll take you out to my own private rest home tonight. We can lock you up if you wish and observe you for a spell to check on these lycanthropic attacks of yours. Personally, Tracy, I think that you have just been working too hard and that this is nothing more than a temporary nervous condition."

Those terrible haunted eyes bored into me again as if to say, "You're a fool, Doctor, a stupid fool."

"I'm sure that with rest and care you'll be fine in a few weeks. Of course, Tracy, there'll be no publicity. We'll tell the studio that you went on a vacation. Doctor's orders and all that, you know."

Collins drummed his fingers on the arms of his chair. "I don't care if the public finds out what I am, as long as you lock me up. I don't want to change and kill again! I can't stand it!" He was

sobbing, and his huge frame was shaking horribly.

"Of we go then, old boy. My car is outside. We'll drive over to the rest home now."

We walked out to the car and got in. I drove slowly through the lighted city. This was no time for conversation. Enough had been said already, so I flipped on the car radio. Some rather happy music chimed out of it. He turned it off, I glanced over at him. He was breathing hard and wringing his hands, but those terrified eyes were staring straight ahead.

I pulled the car into the driveway of my private hospital, came to an easy stop and cut the engine. I snapped off the headlights.

"Well, Tracy," I said. "This place will be your home for a few weeks. You'll get a well-earned rest here, and then back to the studios for some more Academy Awards, eh?"

He said nothing. We got out and walked up to the front door. I opened it and motioned Collins in. He shuffled in staring straight ahead. I followed. Nelson, my chief attendant, was at the desk.

"Good evening, Doctor," he said. "Keeping kind of late hours, aren't you?" He smiled.

"Well, it isn't often that I come here in the middle of the night, but Mr. Collins is a friend of mine, and I suggested he be our guest for a short time."

Nelson walked over to greet Collins. "Glad to know you, Mr. Collins." He extended his hand, Collins ignored it.

"Say, Doctor," Nelson drawled. "I guess you'll want to give Mr. Collins a physical check-up first, just for the record, eh?"

"By all means, and remember Nelson, this is to be strictly confidential. No one is to know that Mr. Collins is our guest."

"Of course, sir. I'll call Moreno to take over the desk, and I'll

help you with the physical." He pressed the call button on the desk. Moreno came out and nodded to us.

"Everything all right, Moreno?" I asked.

"Fine and dandy, Doc. Everything's runnin' smooth."

Moreno was a good man. He had a way with mental patients.

Nelson, Collins and I adjourned to the examination room, and Moreno took over the desk. Inside the room I asked Collins to disrobe. He did so, slowly and nervously. Those terrible eyes still stared.

When he was completely nude he snarled fiercely at us and bolted for the door.

"Oh, oh!" cried Nelson.

I made a grab for Collins and missed.

"Stop him, Nelson!" I yelled.

Nelson jumped at Collins, but the movie star, with the super-human strength of a madman, felled Nelson with one blow, and tore out the door.

Moreno had heard the commotion and was waiting for him. The front door was locked. Between the two of us we had a chance of subduing him. Snarling and slavering, a stark naked madman, he ran for the front door. He rattled at the knob growling and shrieking. The door held. Moreno jumped upon the crazed movie star's back and I came up from behind to help.

"For God's sake, grab hold, Doc!" Moreno panted. "I can't hold him forever!"

With another surge of strength Collins threw Moreno off his shoulders at me. We both went down in a heap.

Collins snarled again and looked through terrible burning eyes at us as we tried to get up. Then he looked around and saw the window. As we half crawled, half ran across the room after him, he

plunged through the window amid a shower of broken glass.

As we hurried to unlock the front door and race after him, we could hear him howling and shrieking across the hospital lawn. We dashed out the door. Now we could see the naked form of Collins running over the spacious moonlit grass. He hurdled the hedge fence and streaked into the road. A screech and a hiss of air brakes. A heartrending scream. Moreno and I ran to the road.

Collins' naked body lay crushed under the cab of a huge trailer truck. One of the front wheels had gone completely over his body. The truck driver was climbing shakily out of the cab.

"I couldn't help it. I couldn't help it!" he sobbed. "He ran right out in front of me!"

"It was an accident, I know." I tried to console the shaken driver. "Let's get his body off the road and call the police."

The driver and I dragged the mangled form of Tracy Collins to the grass near the hedge. Mor-

eno ran in and called the police. "I think we'd better cover him with something," I suggested to the driver. "This is my hospital, and if a crowd gathers I wouldn't want a lot of talk going around about a naked madman being killed here."

"There's an old tarpaulin in the truck. I'll get it," the driver volunteered.

He brought the tarp, and we laid it over poor Collins' mangled body.

Moreno came back with Nelson, who seemed still groggy from that knockout punch.

"Cops will be here right away," Moreno grunted. He looked at the tarpaulin. "Ya covered him up, eh? Keep the nosy ones from lookin' at him and startin' bad rumors."

"Are you all right, Nelson?" I asked.

"Yeah, but what a wallop that boy packed! He should have been in the ring, not pictures, the poor devil."

The police came roaring up, the red light on the prowler car blinking

like a huge evil eye. They slammed on the brakes, and a fat ruddy-faced deputy squeezed out of the car.

"What happened?" he asked.

I pointed to the tarpaulin. "The dead man under that canvas was a patient of mine. He ran out of my hospital and into the road. He was run over by this truck driver, but it was an accident, I assure you."

"Well, let's have a look at him." Another officer was looking at the truck. The fat deputy shouted at him, "Call the morgue, Joe." The deputy walked over to the tarpaulin. "It may sound screwy to you, Doc, but I can't resist looking at these stiffs." He raised the tarp slightly and played his flashlight under the canvas. He dropped the tarpaulin back onto Collins' body and then stalked over to us with his hands belligerently placed on his hips. He glared at us angrily.

"And just what kind of a gag are you tryin' to pull here, Doc?" he barked. "That ain't no man under there. It's a big, ugly dead dog!"

■

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NIGHTMARE PIN UP

#2

FROM THE ANNALS
OF ONE OF OUR
FAVORITE GHOUL
CREATORS...CHIC
STONE

SOUL OF THE WARLOCK

WHAT EXISTS AFTER... DEATH?

WHAT MYSTERIOUS UNFORESEEN FATE AWAITS THOSE WHO EXIT THE WORLD OF THE LIVING? ERIK MORTUS, BOTH GENIUS AND MADMAN, ATTEMPTS TO LEARN THIS SHROUDED SECRET TO QUENCH HIS INSANE LUST FOR POWER! THROUGH HIS STUDIES OF THE BLACK ART, AND BY CONTACTING THE SOUL OF A WIZARD DEAD FOR SOO YEARS, HE SHALL LEARN... TO HIS UNENDING HORROR!

ARCALAS! KEEPER OF THE UNDEAD! METHOGLUS... SOWER OF THE SEEDS OF HATRED! BY THE WILL OF MY MIND... I SUMMON SPIRITS FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE!





ERIK MORTUS KNOWS HIS WIFE IS DEAD. THE RICH, CRIMSON STREAM OF BLOOD Oozing FROM HER SPLIT SKULL TELLS HIM THAT!



SUCH A YOUNG, LOVELY GIRL, ELISE!

A PITY SHE SHOULD MEET WITH SUCH A TRAGIC ACCIDENT! I OFFER MY SINCEREST CONDOLENCES, ERIK!

IT IS A HEAVY BURDEN TO BEAR! BETWEEN THIS AND MY OWN POOR HEALTH...

--I MAY HAVE TO TAKE A HOLIDAY FROM MY PRACTISE FOR SOME PERIOD OF TIME!



WHAT? I KNOW YOU CAN PROVIDE FOR YOURSELF WITH YOUR WEALTH, ERIK, BUT AS FOR THE WELFARE OF THE COMMUNITY...



NIGHT CLOAK'S
THE GLOOMY
COUNTRYSIDE AS
TWO PHYSICIANS
APPROACH THE
SECLUDED MORTUS
MANSION, A
DWELLING THAT
IS IMMENSE...
AND SOMEHOW
GROTESQUE
AND EVIL!



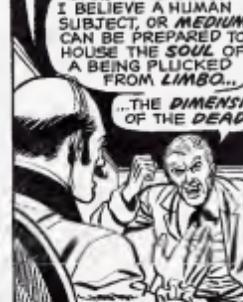
A NICELY-FURNISHED
STUDY, ERIK! THIS
WINE IS EXCELLENT,
ALSO! BUT COME, WHAT
IMPORTANT MATTER
DID YOU SAY YOU WISHED
TO DISCUSS? SOMETHING
CONCERNING YOUR WIFE'S
DEATH?

GOOD LORD,
MAN! DO YOU
MEAN CRYSTAL
BALLS, FORTUNE-
TELLING CARDS,
AND THE REST?

CHILDISH
ROT, RAWLINS!
MY MEANS
ARE
SCIENTIFIC...

B-BUT THIS IS
INSANITY, MORTUS!
EVEN IF SUCH WAS
POSSIBLE, WHO IN
HIS RIGHT MIND
WOULD ALLOW
HIMSELF TO BE
INHABITED BY...

...OR HADN'T YOU
NOTICED THE ODD
TASTE OF YOUR
WINE?

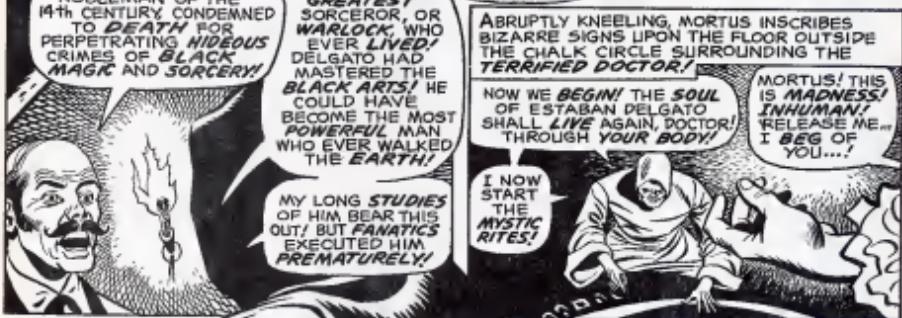


NO! A MUCH MORE
VITAL SUBJECT THAN
ELISE! A PROJECT
OF MINE WHICH WILL
GRANT ME UNLIMITED
POWER!--

COMMUNICATION
WITH THE
DEAD!

I ALREADY
HAVE,
DOCTOR!







IN THE MONTHS THAT FOLLOW, ERIK MORTUS PURSUES TWO INTERESTS! ONE, THE CONQUEST OF A SCORE OF BEAUTIFUL WOMEN...

AHHH, DENISE! HOW EXQUISITE, HOW RAVISHING YOU LOOK! YOUR BEAUTY SETS MY VERY HEART AFIRE!

YOU ARE ALWAYS PUNCTUAL, ERIK, AND ALWAYS WITH PRETTY WORDS! NOW...



AND TWO, THE COLLECTION OF AN UNWILLING SUCCESSION OF "MEDIUMS"... IN REALTY, VICTIMS!

I PRAY THAT THIS FOOL'S BODY SHALL BE THE ONE TO SUCCEED!



ONE OBSESSION... DECEPTIVE!

DARLING! YOU THRILL ME AS NO WOMAN EVER HAS! YOU'RE ALL I'VE EVER DARED DREAM FOR! GRANT ME THE TREASURE OF YOUR TOTAL LOVE!

YOUR NIMBLE TONGUE DOES NOT FOOL ME, ERIK MORTUS! I'VE HEARD HOW YOU BETRAY ALL YOUR WOMEN! STILL YOU, AND YOUR WEALTH, FASCINATE ME...



THE OTHER... DEADLY!

HELP ME! I
FEEL SO WARM!
HORRIBLY WARM!

IT'S HAPPENING
AGAIN! DELGATO'S
SOUL IS BURNING
THE WEAK,
HUMAN BODY!

NO! THAT'S
THE SEVENTH
SUBJECT! I'VE
USED! NONE
OF THEM DO!
THEY JUST
BURN! BURN!!



...AND STRANGE
THINGS HAVE
BEEN WHISPERED
OF YOU, ERIK!
SOME OF THE
VILLAGERS
CLAIM YOU
PEFORM UNHOLY
RITES WITHIN
THAT ISOLATED
RETREAT OF
YOURS!

KNOWING
ME, WHAT
YOU
THINK,
ALICIA?

RUBBISH! YOU ARE NOT OUT OF
THE ORDINARY AT ALL! IN FACT,
TODAY I MET A VERY STRANGE
MAN! ANTON LEFARGE, THE
CONTROVERSIAL FORTUNE-
TELLER AND SPIRITIST! HE
HAS LEFT HIS NATIVE FRANCE
FOR A TOUR OF THE WORLD!
HE'S RIGHT HERE IN TOWN,
AND THEY SAY HE CAN SUMMON
GHOSTLY SPIRITS FROM ANY-
ONE'S PAST!

ANTON LEFARGE! A TRUE
MEDIUM! ONE USED TO
CONTACTING SPIRITS FROM
BEYOND THE GRAVE! HE
WILL DO! YES... HE WILL
DO!



TWO DAYS LATER, AS DARKNESS MANTLES
THE MORTUS MANSION...

DO YE WISH
ME T' RETURN
FOR YE, MISTER
LEFARGE?

AM! M'SIEU MORTUS
AS PROMISED TO
PROVIDE ADEQUATE
TRANSPORTATION FOR
ME, ONCE WE 'AVE
FINISHED OUR
BUSINESS!

M'SIEU MORTUS?
I RECEIVED YOUR
URGENT MESSAGE!
YOU WISH TO SEE ME
ON A MATTER
CONCERNING THE
SUPERNATURAL,
YES?

INDEED!
PLEASE COME UP
TO MY STUDY,
WHERE WE MAY
DISCUSS THIS
FURTHER!



ANTON LEFARGE WILL RECALL MORTUS' FRIENDLY MANNER, A WELL-STYLED STUDY, AND A FINE VINTAGE OF WINE! AFTER THAT, HE SHALL REALIZE HE IS AWAKENING TO A NIGHTMARE!

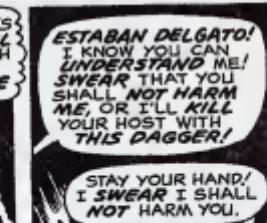
UNNNH!
S-SACRE!
WHERE
AM I?
WH-WHAT
HAPPENED
TO ME?

YOU WERE DRUGGED, MY FRIEND! WELCOME BACK TO THE LAND OF THE LIVING! WE HAVE AN EXPERIMENT TO CONDUCT!



MY EXPERIMENT REQUIRES THE PRESENCE OF AN EXPERT MEDIUM! YOUR BODY SHALL HOUSE THE SOUL OF A WARLOCK DEAD FOR 500 YEARS! A SOUL THAT WILL NEST WITHIN YOUR FLESH AND GIVE ME THE SECRETS TO ABSOLUTE POWER!

NO! EVEN I DO NOT ATTEMPT SUCH! MY SOUL SHALL BE DESTROYED IN THE PROCESS! STOP, M'SIEUR, STOP!



THEN... THE RITUAL COMMENCES!

I BECKON YOU! FOR YOUR NEW SHELL! THAT DECAYED HEAD AGAIN! AM I SUCCEEDING?!



AT LAST! DELGATO'S SPIRIT, HIS IMMORTAL SOUL... MERGING WITH A HUMAN BODY... BUT... UGH! LEFARGE'S FACE HAS BECOME DELGATO'S!

ESTEBAN DELGATO! I KNOW YOU CAN UNDERSTAND ME! SWEAR THAT YOU SHALL NOT HARM ME, OR I'LL KILL YOUR HOST WITH THIS DAGGER!

STAY YOUR HAND! I SWEAR I SHALL NOT HARM YOU.



NOW, I COMMAND YOU TO GIVE ME YOUR WISDOM! I WISH THE SECRETS OF ALCHEMY, CONTROLLING MEN'S MINDS, FORETELLING THE FUTURE, UNLIMITED WEALTH... ALL YOUR OCCULT KNOWLEDGE! I DEMAND ABSOLUTE POWER, FOR I AM HE WHO RETURNED YOU TO LIFE!

PRESUMPTUOUS FOOL! ARE YOU SO CERTAIN THAT I WANT LIFE? DID YOU NEVER THINK THAT I MIGHT CRAVE THE PEACE AND ETERNAL REST AWAY FROM AN EXISTENCE WHERE I WAS SCORNED, PERSECUTED, AND PHYSICALLY TORTURED?





A SCENE OF UTTER HORROR SHOCKS MORTUS' EYES AND NUMBS HIS BRAIN. SEVEN CORPSES, DRIPPING FRESH DIRT AND BURNED BEYOND BELIEF, ENTER THE CHAMBER!



THE FRENCHMAN'S BODY BURSTS INTO FLAME, AS DELGATO RELEASES HIMSELF AND RETURNS TO LIMBO. AND AS IF UPON SIGNAL SEVEN ROTTING, NAUSEATING CORPSES BEGIN A RITUAL OF HORROR ALL THEIR OWN!



BEWARE SMALL EVILS!



TO THOSE WHO SURVIVED TO THE YEAR 1983, SUMMER WAS FULL OF THE USUAL MADNESS, AND THE LETHAL TOLL OF **SMALL EVILS** MOUNTED--AS DID CLOUDS OF CAR EXHAUST, INDUSTRIAL POISONS AND STAGNANT WATER TO STRANGLE EARTH'S FRAGILE **ECOLOGY**... MAKING PURE AIR AND WATER SCARCE...



SUMMER 1983 SAW MUCH OF MAN'S MISUSED TECHNOLOGY COLLAPSE IN UPON ITSELF, AND A CIVILIZED PEOPLE BECOME DESPONDENT WITH THE ADVENT OF CRUEL, ANARCHISTIC, **BARBARIAN YOUTHS**, SUCH AS "SPACEY'S SPITFIRES"---A HUGE MULTI-ETHNIC TERRORIST HOODLUM GANG WHICH TOOK OVER SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA.



THE **SPITFIRES** WERE NAMED AFTER **SPACEY JAGGIN**, A FEMALE MOTORCYCLE TRAMP TURNED "RESPECTABLE" 3-D MOVIE QUEEN WHO TRAGICALLY DIED OF AN OVERDOSE OF AMPHETAMINES MIXED WITH OTHER DEADLY **BODY-POLLUTANTS**...THAT 1984 SUMMER...IN LOS ANGELES.



THE WEEK OF HER FUNERAL, BUT A FEW MILES NORTH OF L.A., IN AN UNOBTRUSIVE AND RECKLESSLY UNGUARDED CLIFF-SIDE RESEARCH CENTER, OVERLOOKING **Oil-Slicked OCEAN**, A CONGRESSMAN INQUIRED--



ALONG THE SMOGGY SEASCAPE, FESTIVE AND BARBARIC LEGIONS OF SPACEY'S SPITFIRES RIDE, SPEWING CARBON MONOXIDE EXHALIST CLOUDS THAT HALF-HID THEIR GRIM TOW--THE COFFIN-CYCLE OF SPACEY JAGLIN...



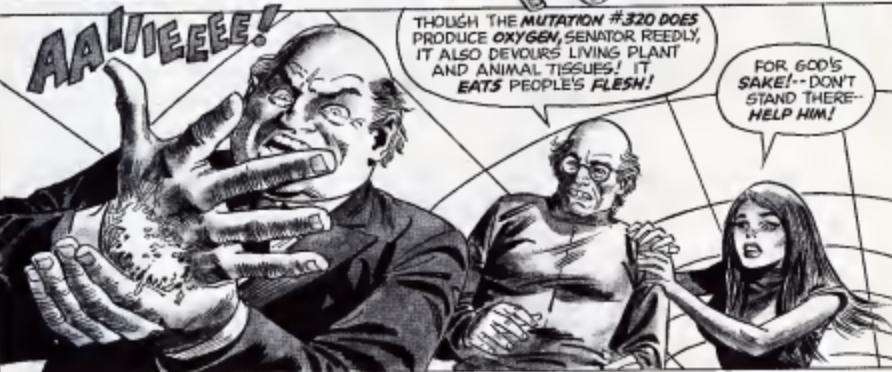
PROFESSOR, DO YOU REALIZE THE MILLIONS THAT CAN BE MADE FROM THIS DEVELOPMENT?

UH, PLEASE DON'T GRAB THE SLIDE, SEN-A-UHH?--

SNAP!

IT'S NOT FULLY DEVELOPED! AT THIS STAGE OF MUTATION-

IT'S PARASITIC!



NOW IF YOU CAN HOLD YOUR
CURIOSITY IN CHECK, PROFESSOR,
I'LL LET YOU WITNESS HOW
WE MUTATE THE STRAIN--

ER-- YOU CAN
CONTROL YOURSELF?--

YES--YES--
ALL RIGHT! BUT
--MY HAND!

MISS SCHIFF, WOULD YOU
PLEASE BRING IN ANOTHER
CULTURE-SLIDE OF
MUTATION #320--

AND--AH-A
FIRST AID
KIT?

YES, SIR!

WHILE IN THE
CUTTER OFFICES...

P-PLEASE
S-SIR!--

DAMN IT!
DON'T GIVE
ME NO RUN-
AROUND!

I KNOW THIS
IS A HOSPITAL!
--AIN'T NO
RESEARCH
CENTER!

S-STOP!
WHAT ARE
YOU DOING
TO HIM!?

IF YOU DOCS DON'T FIX
MY KNEE, I'LL USE YOUR
NECK FOR MY BELT!

YOU ALL
LIE! LIE
LIKE
RUGS!

HERE'S
A FIRST-
AID
KIT!

GIVE IT TO
ME, BROAD!
I'LL PATCH
MYSELF UP
IF NOBODY
ELSE WILL!





BUT FATE PLAYS STRANGE MUSIC, AND THE LYRIC SEA-WINDS EDDIED AND SWIRLED THE FLOATING MUTATION #320 5 MILES UP THE ROAD, TO THE SIGHT OF A PANORAMA OF MOTORCYCLE HOODLUMS PREPARING TO PAY THEIR LAST COARSE RESPECTS...



OCEAN WAVES, CRASHING, POUNDING ON POISONED FISH CARRIAGES PROVIDED THE MUSIC FOR A DRUNKEN BALLET OF BRUTISH FORMS WITH WASTED ANIMALISTIC MINDS, AS THEY DISMOUNTED THEIR BIKES AND STUMBLER NUMBLY INTO ONE ANOTHER IN REVELRY...



TO A ROUSING OFF-KEY CHORUS OF A REFRAIN FROM THE SOUNDTRACK THEME FROM HER LATEST 3-D OPUS, *SPACEY JAGIN* WAS HEFTED ALOFT IN DUBIOUS DIGNITY...



THE PATHETIC CARCASS OF THE LONELY MISUNDERSTOOD, POP SUPERSTAR TUMBLED WITH A FLOP BEFORE HIS BOOTS...THE LEADER AND HIGH PRIEST-GURU WITH THE LAST SHREDS OF HIS DRUG-ROTTED MIND, GROPED FOR APPROPRIATE WORDS--EYES GLAZED...BODY SWAYING...



AT THE COMMAND OF THE FANATICAL "HOLY MAN" LEADER, EACH MEMBER OF THE PRIMITIVE AND SAVAGE SUPERSTITIOUS HERD FILED BY, AND PREPARED HER BROKEN BODY FOR CREMATION!



AND TO THE RHYTHMIC SHOUTS OF HIS MUMBO-JUMBO GURU-RAVINGS, THEY HOISTED HER CORPSE ALOFT WITH TIRE-IRONS AND CROW-BARS, AND SET HER REMAINS ABLAZE!



YOUR DEATH SIGNALS THE END OF AN ERA, OH, SPACEY JAGLIN! OH, GODDESS!

NOW BEGINS A NEW EPOCH! --IN WHICH THE SPITFIRE SHALL ASCEND TO GREAT POWER AND RULE THE WORLD!



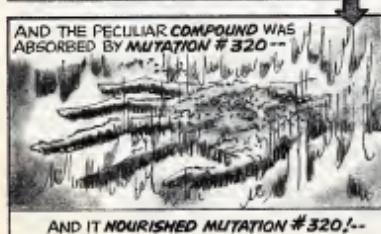
BUT THE CHEMICAL LAWS OF THE UNIVERSE TO NOT BOW TO SUPERSTITION-MONGERS, AND THE HEAT FUSED A COMPOUND OF FORMALDEHYDE, AND THE DRUGS THAT HAD KILLED SPACEY JAGLIN--



AND THE INVIGORATED MUTATION #320 BEGAN TO RISE LIKE YEAST AND CONTINUE TO GROW AND MULTIPLY--



AND THE PECULIAR COMPOUND WAS ABSORBED BY MUTATION # 320--



AND IT NOURISHED MUTATION #320!--

AND ONCE SPARKED TO ACCELERATED GROWTH, IT WOULD NOT STOP!

FOR IT IS
RIGHT THAT
SPACY'S
SPITFIRES
GAIN
VENGEANCE!

HER NAMESAKE ARMY
SHALL OVERRUN
AMERICA!-- THEN THE
WORLD! GRANT US A
SIGN OF APPROVAL,
O POWERS OF SPIRIT
AND GLORY!

BUT REALITY NEITHER HEARS
NOR, HEEDS THE RANTINGS
OF A MYSTIC...



MUTATION #320 FED ON THE CARCAS OF THE GURU-LEADER, GROWING RAPIDLY.
THEN IT FLOATED AWAY, SENSORS QUIVERING IN HUNGRY ANTICIPATION
OF MORE LIFE TO DEVOUR!!!

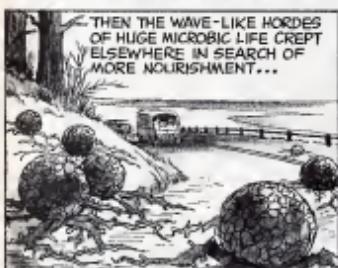


"BUT SEE, AMID THE MIMIC ROUT A CRAWLING SHAPE INTRUDE! A
BLOOD-RED THING THAT WRETCHES WITHOUT THE SCENIC SOLITUDE!
IT WRETCHES!--WITH MORTAL PANGS, THE MIMES BECOME ITS FOOD,
AND THE ANGELS SOB AT VERMIN FANGS IN HUMAN GORE IMBUED.
--POE, THE CONQUEROR WORM.



"GOLDEN LADS AND GIRLS ALL MUST
AS CHIMNEY-SWEEPERS, COME TO DUST."
--WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE,
CYMBALINE, ACT 4, SCENE 2

GROWING, EVER GROWING--SOON MUTATION #320 WAS A TOWERING HEAP OF MALIGNANCY!--DIGESTING HUNDREDS OF TERROR-STRICKEN BIKERS IN A MATTER OF MINUTES! THE SPORES OF DEATH SURGED ONWARD, STILL GROWING!!



THEN THE WAVE-LIKE HORDES OF HUGE MICROBIC LIFE CREEPT ELSEWHERE IN SEARCH OF MORE NOURISHMENT...



AND THOSE WHO WERE UNLUCKY ENOUGH TO HAVE THEIR CAR WINDOWS UNROLLED DID NOT LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO REGRET THEIR MISTAKE...



DON'T PANIC, NURSE! SECURE THE DOORS AND WINDOWS!--

WE CAN WEATHER THIS OUT!

YES, PROFESSOR...

I HOPE YOU RECOGNIZE WHAT THOSE MONSTERS ARE, SENATOR REEDLY!

:ULP:



THEY'RE-ER--IT'S MOVING HEAVEN HELP AWAY NOW PROFESSOR! ALL IN THEIR PATH!

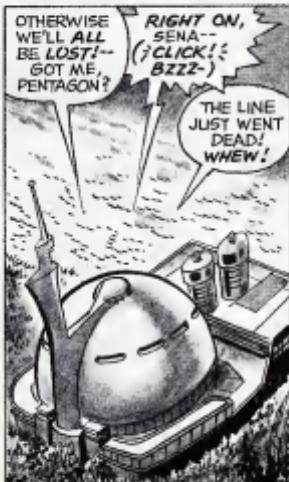
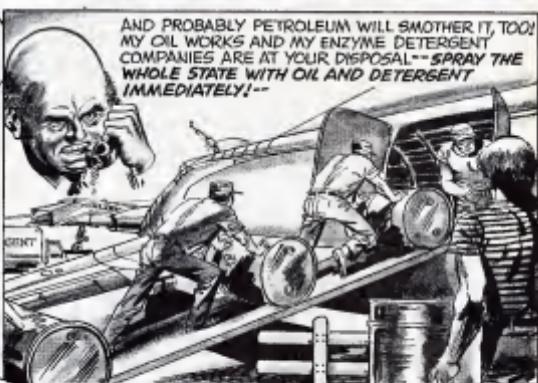
MUTATION #320 THEN SPREAD ON DOWN TO THE OUTSKIRT BEACH RESORTS OF LOS ANGELES...



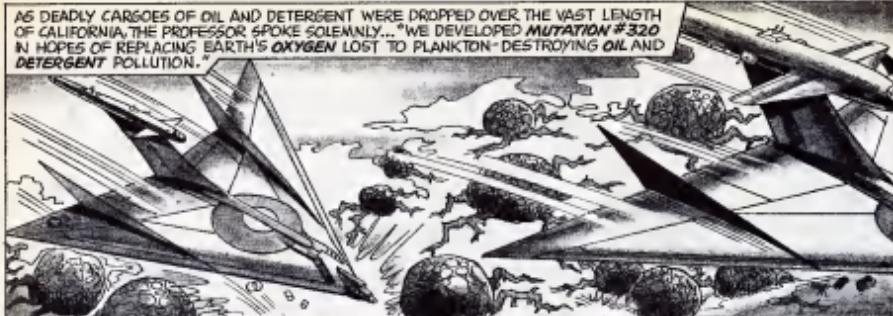
IT GREW TO EVEN MORE FANTASTIC PROPORTIONS, AND ATTACKED CENTRAL LOS ANGELES...AND CONTINUED TO MULTIPLY AND SPREAD ACROSS CALIFORNIA!



WITHIN AN HOUR, MUTATION #320 HAD GROWN SO HUGE THAT IT CROWDED OVER MOST OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA... AND NOT JUST SATIATING ITS APPETITE WITH ANIMAL-LIFE, AS BY THEN MOST SURVIVING PEOPLE WERE SECURED BEHIND LOCKED DOORS, MUTATION #320 ACQUIRED A TASTE FOR PLANTS AND TREES, AS IT GREW--AN IMMENSE, CREEPING CARPET OF DEATH!!



"AS DEADLY CARGOES OF OIL AND DETERGENT WERE DROPPED OVER THE VAST LENGTH OF CALIFORNIA, THE PROFESSOR SPOKE SOLEMNLY... "WE DEVELOPED MUTATION #320 IN HOPES OF REPLACING EARTH'S OXYGEN LOST TO PLANKTON-DESTROYING OIL AND DETERGENT POLLUTION."



"THE VAST DOSAGE OF OIL AND ENZYMES YOU ORDERED WILL DESTROY MUTATION #320, ALL RIGHT!" CONTINUED THE PROFESSOR, AS MILES AND MILES OF OIL-SOAKED MUTATION #320 WERE SET ABLAZE WITH NAPALM...



BY NOW, THE SPORES MUST BE ALL OVER THE GLOBE--NO PLACE WILL BE SPARED THE REMEDIAL CONFLAGRATION!

THEN THE LAND-PLANTS AND THE SEA-PLANKTON WILL ALL GO! --
AND SO WILL ALL THE OXYGEN!

"SOON YOU, ME, THAT HOODLUM WHO BROKE THE SLIDE--WE'LL DIE OF ASPHYXIATION!" SCREAMED THE PROFESSOR... "ALL OXYGEN WILL BE GONE IN ABOUT FOUR DAYS!" --WEPT THE PROFESSOR...



THE END

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